

**Annual Report**  
OF THE  
**NEW JERSEY COMMISSION**  
**FOR THE BLIND**  
**1917**







ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
NEW JERSEY COMMISSION  
FOR THE BLIND .

For the Year Ending October 31  
1917

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Commission Headquarters, 147 Summer Ave., Newark, N. J.



RAHWAY, N. J.  
NEW JERSEY REFORMATORY PRINT  
1918

## NEW JERSEY COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

147 Summer Ave., Newark, N. J.

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MRS. ALBERT T. BECKETT, *President*, .....105 W. Broadway, Salem  
MRS. BLANTON C. WELSH, *Secretary*, ...24 Upper Mt. Av., Montclair  
MR. C. R. DIEFFENBACH, .....Jersey City  
MRS. HARRIET FISHER ANDREW, .....Trenton  
WELLS P. EAGLETON, M. D., .....Newark

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MR. C. R. DIEFFENBACH, reappointed August 22nd, 1917, by Governor Walter E. Edge for full term of three years.

WELLS P. EAGLETON, M. D., commissioned as Major of Medical Section of the Officers' Reserve Corps, United States Army, on September 19, 1917.

MRS. HARRIET FISHER ANDREW, appointed member of Advisory Board of State Purchasing Commission.

MRS. ALBERT T. BECKETT, appointed Budget Officer in compliance with new Budget Act, passed in 1916.

MRS. BLANTON C. WELSH, appointed one of the Central Chairmen of the Women's New Jersey Liberty Loan Bond Committee, September, 1917.

MISS ALICE IRENE WOOD, appointed permanent Executive Secretary of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind, December, 1916.

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### GENERAL STAFF.

MISS ALICE IRENE WOOD, .....Executive Secretary  
MISS J. M. SPRINGER, .....Bookkeeper

### HOME TEACHERS.

MISS ANNE V. WARD, .....Camden  
MISS M. A. SPRINGER, .....Newark  
MR. WILLIAM J. ADICKES, .....Hoboken  
MISS BERTHA M. JOHNSON, .....Bridgeton  
MISS MARGARET R. HOGAN, .....Orange

### TEACHER OF PIANO TUNING AND REPAIRING.

MR. WILLIAM B. SCHOTT, .....Irvington





HEADQUARTERS OF THE NEW JERSEY STATE COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND,  
147 SUMMER AVENUE, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY.



## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

November 1st, 1916, to October 31st, 1917

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### RECEIPTS.

General expenses, .....	\$11,500 00
Preventive work, .....	750 00
Extension of home industries, .....	1,000 00
Revolving industrial fund, .....	1,500 00
Publicity, demonstrations and sales, .....	250 00
Supplemental for preventive work, .....	500 00
Supplemental for rent, .....	600 00
	<hr/> \$16,100 00

### DISBURSEMENTS.

#### *General Expenses.*

Salary of Executive Secretary, .....	\$1,150 00
Salary of Clerk, .....	660 00
Salary of Home Teacher, .....	600 00
Salary of Home Teacher, .....	600 00
Salary of Home Teacher, .....	600 00
Salary of Home Teacher, .....	600 00
Salary of Home Teacher, .....	540 00
Salary of Teacher of piano tuning, .....	150 00
Salary of Guide to Miss Anne V. Ward (Home Teacher), .....	220 00
Salary of Guide to Miss Bertha M. Johnson (Home Teacher), .....	220 00
Salary of Guide to Miss Mary A. Springer (Home Teacher), .....	220 00
Salary of Guide to Miss Margaret R. Hogan (Home Teacher), .....	220 00
Extra services of Guides to three Home Teachers, ..	4 00
Salary of janitress, .....	180 00
Extra clerical help, .....	245 20
Expressage, .....	212 63
Office furniture, .....	76 00
Office supplies, .....	125 98
Postage, .....	192 99
Stationery, .....	28 01
Telephone and telegraph, .....	145 03
Transportation, .....	2,287 31
Maintenance, .....	1,032 18

Blind Workers' supplies, .....	878 54	
Sundries, .....	18 35	
Gas, .....	32 22	
Fire insurance, .....	6 56	
Coal, .....	115 75	
Water assessment, .....	12 62	
Printing, .....	69 25	
Masonry, .....	12 00	
Plumbing, .....	31 74	
Repairing, .....	14 40	
Assistance in preparing materials for class and home work and in shipping goods, .....	17 40	
Rent, .....	600 00	
		<hr/> \$12,118 16

## PREVENTIVE WORK.

Clerical work, .....	\$185 00	
Expressage, .....	21 17	
Postage, .....	9 44	
Transportation, .....	21 32	
Preventive pamphlets and reprints, .....	395 36	
Preventive posters, .....	33 00	
Prescriptions for patients to clinics, .....	1 25	
Sundries, .....	1 25	
		<hr/> 667 79

## EXTENSION OF HOME INDUSTRIES.

Workshop supplies, .....	\$1,026 47	
Stationery, .....	2 20	
Transportation, .....	249 26	
Postage, .....	12	
Sundries, .....	18 95	
		<hr/> 1,297 00

## REVOLVING INDUSTRIAL FUND.

Sewing machine, .....	\$29 70	
		<hr/> 29 70

## PUBLICITY, DEMONSTRATIONS AND SALES.

Services at sales, .....	\$184 50	
Transportation, .....	96 65	
Maintenance, .....	204 39	
Supplies, .....	1 78	
Telephone and telegraph, .....	2 32	
Sundries, .....	13 89	
		<hr/> 503 53
		<hr/> \$14,616 18

## NEW JERSEY COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

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Balance reverting to State Treasury, which includes unused portion, \$1,470.30, of Revolving Industrial Fund, available only for loan purposes, .....	\$1,483 82
Reimbursement to State Treasury, part payment on sewing machine from Revolving Industrial Fund, .....	19 71
Cost of materials supplied to blind, reverting to State Treasury through readjustment of the Sarah J. Churchill Fund,	530 13

# APPROXIMATE STATISTICAL SURVEY OF BLIND, AS ON FILE AT COMMISSION'S HEADQUARTERS

November 1st, 1916, to October 31st, 1917

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Number in State, .....	1,750
Investigated through Commission—	
Males, .....	940
Females, .....	810
Under 20, .....	203
Between 20 and 70, .....	1,098
Over 70 years, .....	449
Teachable blind, .....	636
Under 20, .....	106
Male, .....	55
Female, .....	51
Over 20, .....	530
Male, .....	262
Female, .....	268
Number of blind in educational institutions, .....	98
Of this number there are 29 in public schools.	
Number of blind suitably provided for in own homes, .....	1,220
Number of consignors at Headquarters, .....	105
Occupied blind, .....	870
Remuneratively, .....	362
Industrially, .....	180
Housework, .....	254
Chores, .....	74
Number of blind dependent upon benevolent institutions, .....	100
Number of blind in custodial care (almshouses, prisons, asylums), ..	85
Deaths reported, .....	57
Removals from State, .....	9





PUPIL WEAVING UNDER THE INSTRUCTION OF THE NEW JERSEY STATE  
COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND, AT ITS HEADQUARTERS, 147  
SUMMER AVENUE, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY.

## Report of President

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*Honorable Walter E. Edge, Governor of New Jersey:*

SIR:—In compliance with the law creating the New Jersey Commission for the Blind, I have the honor to submit to your Excellency the following report for the year ending October 31st, 1917, which includes a detailed summary of expenditures of all appropriations granted and the Annual Report of the Executive Secretary.

In April, 1917, the Commission moved its headquarters to 147 Summer Avenue, Newark, New Jersey. The Commission held eleven regular meetings during the year; also three conferences, one with the Newark Board of Health; Julius Levy, M. D., Director of the Division of Child Hygiene represented the Board; one with the New Jersey State Federation of Associations of Workers for the Blind; and the third, of the Home Teachers with the Executive Secretary, held in September, prior to resuming the work of teaching the adult blind in their own homes. It is the aim of the Commission to educate the adult blind, in the home and class room to the highest extent of their capabilities. The present corps of five teachers has been engaged in the work during the past six years in its services for the blind.

As to the blind youth, educators of the blind all agree that the most important feature in the training of the young blind, to meet their great handicap, is proper physical development. The swimming pool, and the concerted activities of dancing, gymnastics and athletics, produce not only physical development, but grace, poise and dexterity of motion; their value to the blind cannot be over-estimated. In order to obtain their best physical development, such training should be made obligatory and available to all blind children attending classes for the blind in public schools.

### RELIEF OF NEEDY BLIND.

It is the policy of the present Commission to secure local



interest and relief for the dependent blind, other than that offered by the Almshouse. Our efforts, in most instances, have proven successful. The ambitious blind living in Almshouses are deprived of the joy and revenue of occupation, for as wage-earners they are not permitted to reside in Almshouses.

The law creating the Commission (Chapter 138, Page 208, P. L. 1909), seems to allow the Commission a wide latitude for action; whereas experience proves that its action is circumscribed by a lack of definiteness. Subsequent amendments have extended the scope of the work, but the problem of suitable relief for the needy blind remains not only untouched by the State, but is more pressing and complex than heretofore. The problem of "ameliorating the condition of the blind" has been worked out in part by a further extension of opportunities for the blind capable of engaging in the industries open to them.

While the Commission has placed itself on record as being opposed to a State Pension for the Blind, the members feel that administering suitable relief for the needy blind is within its legitimate field under Section 2 of the original Act of 1909, namely: *"it shall be the duty of said Commission to provide any and all means which in their judgment shall be deemed feasible for ameliorating the condition of the blind."* The Commission is of the opinion that with a full knowledge of existing conditions, a judicious use of existing agencies of relief, public and private, and the elimination of all idea of almsgiving, a partial solution of this exceedingly complex question could be obtained. The Commission for the Blind is better equipped to investigate the condition of the needy blind, and to meet the responsibilities of the administration of funds that the State may provide for such need, than any other State agency now existing.

#### INDUSTRIES.

The work of the department of home industries has been most gratifying during the year; weaving has become an established new feature, the products being of such quality as to find ready sale; the experiment at brush-making proved successful to the extent that the blind workers produced



brushes which were marketable, but owing to war conditions, the price of materials, especially bristles, advanced so greatly that this industry has been temporarily suspended. The Commission has continued to maintain the same standard of excellence in all products of the blind, including articles in weaving, knitting, basketry, and a great variety of hand and machine made products which have found very ready sale. Chair-caning and piano tuning continue to be the leading industries for the men, and a number of contracts for piano tuning have been secured this year.

It is with no little pride and gratification that the Commission records the success of an industrial experiment, made upon the initiative of the Executive Secretary, Miss Alice I. Wood, at the instance of Mr. F. I. Hiss, Technical Assistant to Dr. Wheeler, President of the Crocker-Wheeler Company at Ampere, New Jersey.

On April 30, 1917, Mr. Hiss, upon Dr. Wheeler's authority, requested of Miss Wood the opportunity of considering the possibilities of instructing and eventually employing blind men and women in certain kinds of work required by electrical manufacturers. As a result, the first experimental test in "coil taping" by the blind, was made at the headquarters of the Commission, 147 Summer Avenue, Newark, New Jersey, on May 11, 1917, with sixteen blind workers present. The test proved so entirely satisfactory to Dr. Wheeler that on May 18th it was arranged to begin continuous employment. Payments were first made to the blind on May 22nd. The Commission expresses its great appreciation of the proposition and Dr. Wheeler's continued interest and support of the project. The work has continued since June in a new workshop at 22 Park Avenue, East Orange, New Jersey, equipped and maintained by the Crocker-Wheeler Company. The Commission has kept in close touch with the work through its Executive Secretary who was given general supervision of the Commission's interests in the blind workers. It is conceded by the Commission that a valuable and unusual opportunity has been given to the blind of New Jersey to engage in a profitable and industrial remunerative occupation.

We note with pleasure that three of the leading educators of the blind in this country, Mr. Edward E. Allen of the

Perkin's Institution for the Blind, Watertown, Massachusetts; Professor O. H. Burritt of the Pennsylvania Institute for the Instruction of the Blind at Overbrook, Pennsylvania, and Professor Edward M. Van Cleve of the New York Institute for the Blind, New York City, have visited the workshop at East Orange, New Jersey, and are deeply interested in the outcome of the experiment. We are informed that these educators went home with new inspiration for their own work; the result of the visit was to them "broadening and inspirational in its effect."

The blind in New Jersey and the Commission are to be congratulated upon the results obtained in this new form of industrial employment for the blind. A detailed statement of the work and earnings of the blind workers at the shop is included in the report of the Executive Secretary.

While the Commission as a whole has assisted in the project, especial credit is due to the Recording Secretary, Mrs. Blanton C. Welsh, Commissioner, and the Executive Secretary, Miss Alice I. Wood, and the teachers in the northern districts of the State for their persistent and untiring effort to overcome the innumerable obstacles, attendant upon securing and maintaining the interest of the blind workers, especially where transportation for some distance has been involved.

The Boy Scouts have figured largely as guides for the blind workers, and thereby rendered most valuable service.

The State of New Jersey should give financial assistance to this and other occupations for the blind, because of their great economic and educational value.

This could be accomplished in part by augmenting the wages of the blind worker during a reasonable time of apprenticeship.

The Massachusetts Commission for the Blind has in force a policy of augmentation of wages, the purpose of which is to encourage the blind worker to greater effort. The augmentation should continue until the wages are such that he can maintain a suitable livelihood.

#### PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.

Last year the Commission was discussing the question of

Prevention of Blindness in theory; this year it has considered the work with data and limited statistics, gathered from our publicity campaign; limited, because of insufficient funds. Statistics show that there were 20,000 school children in the State suffering from eye defects, which clearly proves the urgency of establishing special classes for pupils with defective vision in our public schools, and enforcing the law requiring medical inspection throughout the State; there are some communities that appear to evade this law.

The Commission has vigorously pursued its publicity campaign in the interest of Prevention of Blindness and Conservation of Vision. We have endeavored to educate the public in this important phase of the work by means of illustrated lectures through Woman's Clubs, Parent-Teacher Associations and schools, also through the medium of the press, and free distribution of literature, some of which is printed in several foreign languages, for distribution among aliens. The work of Prevention is greatly in need of recognition by the public and of its forceful co-operation to eradicate needless blindness.

With the compiled statistics of causes of blindness given by the blind in New Jersey and recorded by the Commission as a basis, the Commission has endeavored to learn what proportion of the causes of blindness of inhabitants of this State is preventable; this report as well as compiled data secured by a survey of hospitals in the State conducting eye clinics or giving treatment to eye diseases, both of which have been prepared by Wells P. Eagleton, M. D.—member of this Commission and Ophthalmologist and surgeon at the Newark Eye and Ear Infirmary, are included in this Annual Report.

We especially note that citizens of New Jersey avail themselves of the privilege of attending the eye clinics of the New York Eye and Ear Hospital, which reports several hundred New Jersey cases treated in 1916, and the Will's Eye Hospital of Philadelphia, which reports 1,023 New Jersey patients treated for eye diseases in 1916;—this includes several cases of Trachoma which were isolated.

A recent survey regarding Ophthalmologists and eye conditions in sixteen Institutions of the State to which its wards are committed, and receiving entire or part benefit of State moneys, indicates that suitable provision for the proper care



of the eyes is not provided or maintained in these Institutions, and that only nine of these have Staff Ophthalmologists, two of which, the State Hospital at Morris Plains, and the States Prison at Trenton, have Resident Staff Ophthalmologists; seven have visiting Staff Ophthalmologists, three employ Ophthalmologists when required, and four Institutions report Eye Examinations by physicians only. The report is appended.

SURVEY OF OPHTHALMOLOGISTS AND EYE CONDITIONS IN  
STATE AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS IN NEW JERSEY  
RECEIVING BENEFIT OF STATE MONEY

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Institutions Reporting, .....	16
Institutions Reporting Ophthalmologist on Staff, .....	9
Resident Ophthalmologist, .....	2
State Hospital, .....	Morris Plains
State Prison, .....	Trenton
Visiting Ophthalmologist, .....	7
Arthur Home and Kindergarten for Blind Babies, ....	
.....	Summit (private)
State Home for Disabled Soldiers, .....	Kearny
State Home for Girls, .....	Trenton
State Hospital, .....	Trenton
State Institution for Feeble-Minded Women, ..	Vineland
State School for the Deaf, .....	Trenton
Training School for Feeble-Minded Children, .....	
.....	Vineland (private)
Institutions reporting Ophthalmologists, though not on Staff, .....	3
New Jersey Village for Epileptics, .....	Skillman
State Manual Training and Industrial School, .....	
.....	Bordentown
State Reformatory for Women, .....	Clinton
Institutions Reporting no Ophthalmologist; Eye Examinations Con- ducted by Physician, .....	4
State Home for Boys, ..Jamesburg (visiting physician)	
State Home for Disabled Soldiers, .....	
.....	Vineland (visiting physician)
State Reformatory for Boys, .....	
.....	Rahway (visiting physician)
State Tuberculosis Sanitarium, .....	
.....	Glen Gardener (resident physician)
Institutions Reporting Eye Examination on admission and continuously thereafter, .....	1
Arthur Home and Kindergarten for Blind Babies, ....	
.....	Summit (private)

Institutions Reporting Eye Examination on admission and thereafter  
when necessary, .....5

State Home for Boys, .....	Jamesburg
State Prison, .....	Trenton
State Reformatory, .....	Rahway
State School for Deaf, .....	Trenton
Training School for Feeble-Minded Children, .....	Vineland (private)

## Institutions Reporting Eye Examinations when necessary only, .....8

State Home for Disabled Soldiers, .....	Kearny
State Home for Disabled Soldiers, .....	Vineland
State Home for Girls, .....	Trenton
State Hospital, .....	Trenton
State Institution for Feeble-Minded Women, ..	Vineland
State Manual Training and Industrial School, .....	Bordentown
State Tuberculosis Sanitarium, .....	Glen Gardener
State Village for Epileptics, .....	Skillman

## Institutions Reporting Eye Examination once a year, .....1

State Reformatory for Women, .....	Clinton
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## Institutions Reporting Eye Examination on admission only, .....1

State Hospital, .....	Trenton
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## Institutions Reporting Cases in Need of Eye Treatment, .....9

Arthur Home and Kindergarten for Blind Babies,....	Summit (private)
All receive treatment. Residents, .....	45
State Home for Boys,.....	Jamesburg
Number receiving treatment not known. Residents, ..	602
State Home for Girls, .....	Trenton
About one-third receive treatment. Residents, .....	250
State Home for Disabled Soldiers, .....	Kearny
40 receive treatment. Residents, .....	424
State Hospital, .....	Morris Plains
20 receive treatment. Residents, .....	2,700
State Hospital, .....	Trenton
Very few receive treatment. Residents, .....	1,790
State Reformatory, .....	Rahway
About 15 per cent. receive treatment. Residents, ....	573
State School for the Deaf, .....	Trenton
15 per cent. requiring glasses. Residents, .....	200
Training School for Feeble-Minded Children, .....	Vineland (private)
3 per cent. receive treatment. Residents, .....	470

Institutions Reporting did not know the number in need of Eye Treat-  
ment, .....2

State Home for Boys, .....	Jamesburg
Residents, .....	602
New Jersey States Prison, .....	Trenton
Residents, .....	1,048

Institutions Reporting no Cases in need of Eye Treatment, .....	5
State Home for Disabled Soldiers, .....Vineland	
Residents, .....	395
State Institution for Feeble-Minded Women, ..Vineland	
Residents, .....	687
State Reformatory for Women, .....Clinton	
Residents, .....	76
State Tuberculosis Sanitarium, .....Glen Gardener	
Residents, .....	300
State Village for Epileptics, .....Skillman	
Residents, .....	702
Institutions Reporting Careful Examination for defects of vision or various kinds of "sore eyes", .....	12
Arthur Home and Kindergarten for Blind Babies, ....	
.....Summit (private)	
State Home for Disabled Soldiers, .....Vineland	
State Home for Girls, .....Trenton	
State Hospital, .....Morris Plains	
State Hospital, .....Trenton	
State Institution for Feeble-Minded Women, ..Vineland	
State Reformatory for Boys, .....Rahway	
State Reformatory for Women, .....Clinton	
State School for the Deaf, .....Trenton	
State Tuberculosis Sanitarium, .....Glen Gardener	
Training School for Feeble-Minded Children, .....	
.....Vineland (private)	
State Village of Epileptics, .....Skillman	
Institutions Reporting no Regular Examination for Defects of vision or various kinds of "sore eyes" (except when trouble arises) .....	4
State Home for Boys, .....Jamesburg	
State Home for Disabled Soldiers, .....Kearny	
State Manual Training and Industrial School, .....	
.....Bordentown	
State's Prison, .....Trenton	

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Through the continued co-operation of the State Board of Health, duplicate copies of all reported cases of Ophthalmia and Trachoma are sent to this Commission; these are immediately followed up by the Executive Secretary. The Commission for the Blind recognizes the fact that while it is not directly responsible for the cure of 42 cases of Ophthalmia, and 4 cases of Trachoma, so reported by local Health Boards during the past year, nevertheless we do maintain that the aggressive follow-up work of our Commission of all cases of preventable blindness reported to us by the State Board of Health, has been largely conducive to the prevention of blindness and to the prevention of the spread of Trachoma. Local Boards of Health throughout the State have so indicated to

the Commission. This is especially notable in reference to cures of Trachoma in the city of Newark, as indicated in the report of the conference held on January 10, 1917, with Dr. Julius Levy, who represented the Division of Child Hygiene of the Newark Board of Health, which Department is here commended for its activities in regulating the practice of midwifery, and in the control and prevention of Ophthalmia Neonatorum or sore eyes of the new born.

Dr. Levy stated that up to December 1, 1916, no follow-up work of reported cases of Trachoma had been conducted by the Newark Board of Health, but as a result of the Commission's activities he was notified by Dr. Charles V. Craster, on January 10, 1917, that thereafter all cases of Trachoma in children under twelve years, reported to the Newark Board of Health, would be referred to his department for further investigation,—all cases over twelve years to be followed up by the Board of Health. Dr. Levy assured us of his hearty co-operation along these lines and congratulated the Commission on its splendid efforts in stimulating the follow-up work of eye cases where blindness was preventable, which was of unquestioned value.

Many thousand copies of pamphlets on Prevention of Blindness have been purchased from the American Medical Association and the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness. The New Jersey Commission for the Blind records its appreciation of the hearty co-operation of the National Committee which has gratuitously supplied us with lectures to carry on more effectively the work of Prevention of Blindness.

Realizing the fact that many of the lecturers on the staff of the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness have entered various departments of the United States' service, this Commission secured the services of the following Ophthalmologists to lecture in New Jersey: Harry Vaughn, M. D., Ophthalmologist, Morristown, New Jersey; Ralph Opdyke, M. D., Ophthalmologist, Montclair, New Jersey; E. S. Sherman, M. D., Ophthalmologist, Newark, New Jersey; J. F. Chattin, M. D., Ophthalmologist, Newark, New Jersey; Charles Rittenhouse Heed, M. D., Ophthalmologist, at Jefferson Hospital, Philadelphia; J. Milton Griscom, M. D., Ophthal-



mologist, at Jefferson Polyclinic and Will's Eye Hospitals, Philadelphia; and James Hunter, Jr., M. D., Ophthalmologist, at Will's Eye Hospital, Philadelphia. The last three physicians are on the surgical staff at Will's Eye Hospital.

#### IN GENERAL.

Nothing the Commission has done along lines of publicity work since its beginning, has measured up to the effect of the Exhibit and Demonstration held in the Museum at the State Capitol, at Trenton, New Jersey, in February 1917, through the courtesy and co-operation of the State Department of Conservation and Development.

It attracted State-wide attention and records show an attendance of over 4,000, which included members of the Legislature, and public officials attending the Legislative session, who prior to the Exhibit, knew little or nothing of the work of the Commission for the Blind. Miss Perry in charge of the State Museum, very efficiently conducted the program of publicity as well as artistically arranging the display of products of the blind.

The use of a booth at the State Fair at Trenton this year (for the first time), obtained without cost through the efforts of Mrs. Harriet Fisher Andrew and the courtesy of Colonel M. F. Margerum, afforded an excellent opportunity to acquaint the public with the work of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind, and also furnished a splendid market for the sale of the products of the blind. It is an established policy of the Commission to turn over to the blind producer all the money from the sale of articles,—marketing the products of the blind being one method of “ameliorating” their condition.

It is with a sense of gratification that we record this substantial progress in the work for the blind in the State of New Jersey, and also that we have endeavored this year to reconstruct the conduct of affairs so that they could be administered upon a more efficient business basis.

Believing that every aspect of the work in which the Commission is engaged, should be extended and developed so that the task of “ameliorating the condition of the blind,” preventing needless blindness, and conserving the vision could be more completely fulfilled, we have the honor to submit to your



Excellency the following recommendations for your careful consideration :

#### RECOMMENDATIONS.

*First:* That the act creating the Commission for the Blind and defining its powers, be so revised or amended as to give adequate authority for financial support for the needy blind.

*Second:* The augmentation of wages of blind workers in some form for a limited period, to stimulate them to their best effort in industrial occupations; period to be determined by the ability of the worker.

*Third:* Extension of the curriculum in the special classes for the blind in public schools in New Jersey to procure the same standard of physical development that obtains in residential schools for the blind.

*Fourth:* The establishment of special classes for pupils with defective vision in the public schools in New Jersey, in the interest of Conservation of Vision and Prevention of Blindness. We are informed that the Department of Education in New York City has established nine such classes since December, 1916. New Jersey also must awake to this pressing need.

*Fifth:* The Commission strongly recommends the enforcement of State laws requiring medical inspection in public schools, and that the same be extended to include ophthalmologist's examination of school children reported with seriously defective vision.

*Sixth:* Regular visits for examination and treatment be made by an ophthalmologist, as a member of the staff of all State Institutions, and all others containing wards of the State.

*Seventh:* That a substantial increase be made in the appropriations so that the Commission may employ a Field Secretary. A thorough survey of the State is necessary to make an inventory of the work of the Home Teachers during the past six years; to learn existing conditions of the blind, especially to investigate those of the needy blind; to follow up reported cases of preventable blindness; to arrange for the conduct of persons suffering from serious eye diseases to

hospitals,—in fact to have general supervision of all field work.

This year, as last, the Commission finds it an impossible task to enumerate the agencies and individuals that have assisted in the work for the blind and in the interest of Prevention of Blindness, but to all legislators, officials, State Departments and local Boards; to individuals and organizations, public, private, philanthropic; to physicians, merchants, hotels, churches, and social workers, and to those who have given voluntary service at the headquarters and exhibitions, the Commission extends its gratitude, and asks a continuation of the support and co-operation extended. To our own force of workers, in office and field, sighted and sightless, we express our hearty appreciation of the devoted and unselfishness service rendered to the State and the blind within it.

Respectfully submitted,

MRS. ALBERT T. BECKETT,

President.

## Executive Secretary's Report

*To the New Jersey State Commission for the Blind:*

I beg to submit the following report for the fiscal year ending October 31st, 1917:

### INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT.

#### HOME TEACHING.

The teaching of the adult blind in their own homes, was the first organized work of the Commission and has been continued with increasing interest and extended activities since its establishment. The State is divided into five districts covered by five Home Teachers with reports as follows:

<i>Counties.</i>	<i>Lessons Taught.</i>	<i>Time.</i>	<i>Pupils Taught.</i>	<i>New Re-Investi- Pupils. gations.</i>	<i>Obtained. Mileage. Statistics</i>	
<b>MISS WARD:</b>						
Camden, Mercer, Warren, Burlington, Gloucester, Middlesex, Hunterdon.....	1130	831 hrs.	66	17	38	6334 22
<b>MISS HOGAN:</b>						
Passaic, Essex, Hudson, Bergen, Morris, Sussex...	912	799 hrs.	50	11	49	7223 10
<b>MISS JOHNSON:</b>						
Atlantic, Cape May, Cum- berland, Gloucester, Cam- den, Salem.....	600	703 hrs.	40	8	27	7958 8
<b>MISS SPRINGER:</b>						
Monmouth, Morris, Essex, Middlesex, Bergen, Hud- son, Union, Somerset, Hunterdon.....	614	520 hrs.	55	4	62	6261 8
<b>MR. ADICKES:</b>						
Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Mid- dlesex, Morris, Passaic, Union.....	1049	860 hrs.	79	29	35	7744 13
	4305	3713 hrs.	290	69	211	35520 66

The increase in lessons taught over last year numbers 549.

The zeal and faithful application of the Home Teachers to the work in hand has afforded individual attention to pupils in class and home instruction of the adult blind whose lives lack the refreshing and invigorating interests of the outside world. A new weekly class for women was formed in Jersey City this year and conducted by Miss Hogan with 316 lessons in various industries for women. Miss Springer's class meet-

ing once a week at headquarters also sustained its usual interest under her leadership—270 lessons were given during the year. A number of our blind women workers have with a fine spirit of loyal patriotism offered their services to make knitted goods for the soldiers in connection with the work of the Red Cross organization which is now engaging the interest of all. The men's class, at which 202 lessons were given in chair caning, willow and reed work, and brush making, conducted at the Commission rooms under the instruction of Mr. Adickes, met twice a week until April, when the Commission removed to its present new quarters at 147 Summer Avenue, Newark, New Jersey, and the class was discontinued for lack of funds for transportation. A number of these men are among the most earnest workers employed at the Crocker-Wheeler shop in East Orange.

Poultry raising has been very successfully engaged in by one of our New Jersey Blind men whose original and ingenious methods of numbering his hens, and instituting a practical trap nest system, has attracted the interest of neighboring poultrymen and the blind. He reports that the profit on his flock amounted one year to \$2.25 per hen.

Persistent endeavor has been made through the entire year to secure out-of-town piano tuning contracts, with the result that three Boards of Education (in addition to that of Newark already obtained) have increased the opportunities of our blind tuners. Seventy-four lessons were given by the instructor in tuning this year. An increased number of orders for piano tuning have been received by the Commission for the Blind this year. An additional piano was secured gratis through the generosity of the Armstrong Piano Company of Newark for the use of the tuning class. Mr. Schatt, the instructor, had the privilege of taking the summer course of instruction opened to the blind at the Danquard Piano Player Action School of New York City.

With 782 chairs caned and net earnings to the blind of \$702.23 (an increase of \$221 over last year), the stimulated interests of small and large concerns favorably disposed toward broadening this work for the blind has proven profitable. Caning is always well done, and is shared at all times by any competent blind caner in need of employment.

The situation of extended activities for the blind continues to be a serious problem to every organization, State or private, working in the interest of the blind, and your Commission should feel gratified in that it has made pioneer efforts in a new and practical form of remunerative employment offered to the blind of New Jersey through the firm of the Crocker-Wheeler Company of Ampere, a large electrical manufacturing concern. The work which consists of taping wire coils for electrical supplies, received its initial impetus at the Commission Headquarters, 147 Summer Avenue, Newark, in May 1917, when it was given its first experimental test by sixteen blind workers. As the State, however, through this Commission, could offer no financial aid in either building or equipment, the Crocker-Wheeler Company furnished and equipped the shop at 22 Park Avenue, East Orange, where the blind are now engaged in the occupation of taping the coils. The present average daily



attendance is twenty-four workers, about eight of whom are earning over a dollar per day, one totally blind woman making as much as \$9.75 one week.

Experience has proven that only by concentrated and continued effort can the interest of the blind be secured at the outset, and obstacles overcome which would make their continued application to the task in hand possible. The work at the shop progresses with the same sustained interest on the part of the entire Commission and its staff as originally given the proposition. The transportation of the blind workers constitutes an important problem, in which the Boy Scouts have performed a splendid service by escorting the blind men and women to and from the workshop to the car barns, one Scout making a record of two hundred and eighty-one trips during the month of August.

The important issues bearing upon this industrial experiment are very apparent. Given an equal chance with the sighted workers in the production of a well-finished article, there is every incentive to succeed, to become more self-reliant, and to overcome the natural barrier of timidity behind which many capable blind have screened their real ability. The knowledge of practical business methods thus acquired, the required standards of excellence in the industrial output, and the realization of the dignity and worth of their labor surely constitutes an advance in the movement for industrial occupations for the blind. The total earnings of the workers from May 22nd, 1917 (first date of payment) to October 30th, 1917, have amounted to \$1,178. The Home Teachers have given their unfailing support to this project; their united efforts, with those of the office, covering Essex, Hudson, Passaic and Union Counties.

The Brewster Sons Company continued to furnish the blind with cocoa and chocolate products until July, 1917, when the Commission was advised by the State Comptroller to discontinue its active interest in handling the goods or in maintaining these accounts of the blind, as the Commission could not, under the law, act as an agent for the sale of these products. The receipts for the year to July 1st, amounted to \$2,981.63. The business hereafter will be conducted directly with the firm of Brewster Sons Company, the Commission co-operating insofar as allowable.

The growth of the industries, home and class work, has been energized by the introduction of weaving. Although the progress was at first slow, the weavers have been interested, and have made considerable advancement. The quality of the woven articles has been of such character that no difficulty has been experienced in the marketing of all woven products, in fact, the supply has not been equal to the demand. In this the first year of experimentation in brush-making, hearth and floor brushes have been well made. Reed basketry has continued with interest and success in sales of stock produced. It is very satisfactory to note that the well-sustained standard of excellence of the articles made by the blind and placed for sale with the Commission, is eliminating to a great extent the purchase of products of the blind from sympathy. It is always gratifying to the Commission to exhibit articles made under

hampering physical conditions which deserve the attention of those interested in our work. A number of new articles, useful, attractive and marketable, have been added to our list, including many in hand and machine sewing and knitted work. An extended field for the exhibit and disposal of goods made by the blind was secured through the patronage of hotels at the shore and mountains during the summer season. The publicity thus obtained is of inestimable value, and yields to the blind what we strive at all times to secure for them,—a market for their products and earlier pecuniary returns. Sales and exhibits at the County Fairs and at the Inter-State Fair at Trenton have given publicity to the work of the Prevention of Blindness, and the industrial interests of the blind have brought very gratifying financial returns. The number of sales and demonstrations held during the year was nineteen,—in the following localities,—Jersey City, Montclair, Bloomfield, Hackensack, Woodcliff, Paterson, Passaic, Trenton (State Museum and Inter-State Fair); Bayonne, Perth Amboy, Robert Treat Hotel Newark, Rahway, Plainfield, Asbury Park, Lake Hopatcong, Red Bank and Bordentown, yielding a financial return of \$1,327.09. The amount paid directly to the blind by the Commission through the Industrial Department, which includes tuning, caning of 782 chairs with net profits of \$702.23 was \$1,963.23. Including the earnings of the blind at the workshop, \$1,178, and those of the pupils reported only in part by the teachers as \$525.85, makes the sum total of reported earnings \$3,667.08. This sum does not include the profits from sales of cocoa and chocolate products. In this Department of our work, 3,477 articles were consigned by 105 blind, and about 1,500 towels, sewing bags, aprons, and other articles were cut out during the year.

#### PREVENTIVE.

The Commission's activities have been well sustained through the State. In the recognized value of an extended publicity campaign in the work of Prevention of Blindness and Conservation of Vision, High Schools and Women's Clubs have been circularized, and both have given their cordial support and co-operation in arranging for illustrated lectures on the conservation of the eyesight of the children and citizens of the State. An elemental knowledge of the fundamental facts bearing upon this important phase of public health is particularly necessary to all young people. The benefit of such instruction has been indicated to the school authorities, and has met with appreciated support. Over 1,000 students attended one of these lectures. During the winter illustrated addresses were also given before women's clubs and other organizations at which a large number of pamphlets on Babies' Sore Eyes and kindred subjects were distributed in various parts of the State during the Baby Week Campaign. In some instances the interest thus aroused has led to requests for other addresses. During the year the lectures furnished by the National Committee and New Jersey Ophthalmologists for the Commission, have been as follows:



BLIND WORKERS EMPLOYED BY THE CROCKER-WHEELER COMPANY TAPING  
COILS AT THE DOUBLE DUTY FINGER GUILD, 22 PARK AVENUE,  
EAST ORANGE, NEW JERSEY, UNDER SUPERVISION OF  
THE NEW JERSEY COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND.





## GENERAL LECTURES.

Merchantville.....	Miniature Federation of Women's Clubs
Hackensack, .....	Woman's Club
Metuchen, .....	Boro Improvement Association
Upper Montclair, .....	Woman's Club
Trenton, .....	International Institute—Y. M. C. A.
Boonton, .....	Woman's Club
Edgewater, .....	Edgewater Book Club
Nutley, .....	Woman's Club
Glen Ridge, .....	Woman's Club
Little Falls, .....	Woman's Club
Matawan, .....	Woman's Club
Bayonne, .....	Woman's Club
Camden, .....	Woman's Club
Roselle, .....	Clio Club
Haddonfield, .....	Haddonfield Fortnightly Club

## SCHOOL LECTURES.

Caldwell.	Bayonne (Free Public Library).
Plainfield.	Summit.
Woodbury.	Passaic.
Phillipsburg.	Newark.
Bloomfield.	

The State Board of Health reported to this Commission 20 cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum, 37 Purulent Ophthalmia, 36 Trachoma, and 3 Gonorrheal Ophthalmia. Each case was immediately and closely followed up by the Commission with the local Boards of Health, these aggressive activities resulting in reported cures since December 1916, (including reports on 1915-1916 cases just received) as follows: 25 Ophthalmia Neonatorum, 16 Purulent Ophthalmia, 4 Trachoma and 1 Gonorrheal Ophthalmia. Other cases have been reported as improving. Undiminished vigilance in stimulating the necessary but lax follow-up activities of the local Boards of Health in these eye diseases is a factor of utmost importance in our State work. It may be added, however, that a few of the apparently disinterested Boards have recently made distinct efforts to heartily co-operate with the Commission in the elimination of blindness in all preventable cases. A list of nurses employed by civic organizations and other agencies in New Jersey has been secured, and the co-operation and service of these nurses should be of value in follow-up work in cases indicated. The Commission has provided the means whereby a number of persons suffering from more or less serious eye diseases have received proper medical attention and have been benefitted thereby.

The teachers have assisted in securing the names of dispensaries which give free treatment for eye diseases, effecting in this way closer co-operation with clinics; learning of new and needy cases which might come under the Commission's supervision; and also arranging for the distribution of preventive literature in various languages through such agencies, thus reaching a certain proportion of the alien element that

have not been accessible through lectures. Libraries have been circularized, and have responded to the suggestions for the use of the maps, slides and chart exhibits illustrating eye diseases and methods of their prevention, utilizing this avenue as a means of publicity, also the distribution of pamphlets containing valuable suggestions and of interest to all patrons, acquainting them with the development and progress of this constructive phase of Commission work. One hundred sets of industrial eye accident posters (large) for display in industrial concerns, have been purchased by the Commission from the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness, whose unfailing spirit of co-operation has been much appreciated; and 200 sets of these posters, in smaller sizes, were secured for distribution through the State Department of Labor; also 200 vision charts from the American Medical Association, 75 of which were forwarded to the State Board of Education for use in remote rural school districts. 21,100 pamphlets have been purchased from the National Committee, and 7,000 from the American Medical Association whose co-operation is also valued. About 21,500 pamphlets were distributed during the year.

A list of 264 causes of blindness as given by the blind themselves, has been compiled by this Commission, and constitutes a basis for ascertaining the percentage of preventable causes of blindness in New Jersey.

#### PREVENTABLE BLINDNESS.

Out of a total of about 1,700 cases, and taking the causes as given by the blind themselves, there is a large proportion, nearly 30 per cent., 510 of which are preventable if the proper precautions are taken in future. These can be divided into three groups:

1. Of those due to accident, 219, the vast majority occurring in the industries are preventable, if proper safety devices as required by law are enforced, such as protecting glasses. Fireworks, 2, as a cause, should not appear in the future, if the local authorities enforce the law.

2. Those due to preventable diseases, such as Ophthalmia Neonatorum, 90; Purulent Ophthalmia Neonatorum, 25; Trachoma, 86, and Wood Alcohol, 1. Blindness following these diseases is avoidable if proper preventive measures required by law are enforced. Local and State health authorities and Blind Commissions should hold the offenders responsible in such cases which result in blindness and which might be due to neglect of the proper precautions required by law.

3. Blindness following diseases in which proper treatment of the eyes will, in all but exceptional cases, prevent the loss of vision—such diseases as erysipelas, 1; nicotine poisoning, 1; scarlet fever, 32; measles, 2; whooping cough, 4; syphilis, 6. Affections of the eyes in these diseases should not result in blindness if the eye affection is recognized by the attending physician sufficiently early to institute proper treatment.

This Commission advocated a law compelling all physicians to immediately report all affections of the eyes resulting from this group of diseases, stating that a competent physician is in charge, so that when a specialist is not attending, the local authorities may delegate such.

The limited survey made by this Commission during the past year showing that there were 20,000 school children suffering from eye defects, and that there were a number of school districts without proper medical school inspection, serves as a basis for recommendations for sight-saving classes for which no provision whatever has been made in New Jersey. With the co-operation of nurses, school physicians and Health Boards, and other organized efforts, a study as to prevailing conditions could be obtained, with a view to establishing classes for children with defective vision. One case recorded which might properly have received scholastic training in such a class, is that of a twelve-year-old boy brought to our attention the past winter. Unable to secure admission to a class for the blind because of a certain percentage of vision, or to benefit by regular instruction given his sighted schoolmates in whose class he found himself, there seemed no place for him. Rapidly failing vision, due doubtless to ignorance and lack of proper medical attention, finally resulted in his admission to a State School for the Blind. The inadequate and improper lighting of schools, the non-adjustable and lustrous desks, the use of the common towel, examination of and general instruction as to the care of the eyes and provision for treatment of children of indigent parents, constitutes some of the existing school problems for the Commission's serious consideration.

#### STATISTICS.

During the year 10 pupils (1 withdrawing) were admitted to the New York Institute for the Blind; 9 (3 withdrawing) to the Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind, Overbrook, Pa.; 5 to the Arthur Home and Kindergarten, Summit, N. J.; 1 to the Home for Epileptics, Skillman, N. J.; 1 to the State School for the Blind, Baltimore, Maryland; 1 to the Training School for the Feeble-Minded Children at Vineland, N. J., and 1 to the Trenton Lighthouse, Trenton, N. J.

193 new cases (including 50 of Ophthalmia and 38 of Trachoma reported to us by the State Department of Health) have been added to our statistics this year. All of these cases receive the immediate attention of the office and our staff of teachers, and such provisions encouraged which was best suited to the individual need presented. Fifty-seven deaths have been reported during the current year. The reclassification of statistics for more full and ready reference is important, and the Commission hopes to accomplish this task in the coming year.

#### SOCIAL.

The monthly social gatherings of the blind and their friends at headquarters, to which many kind friends contributed their talent, have been continued throughout the year with an average attendance of about thirty blind. A Thanksgiving dinner to twenty-two, and a Christmas dinner to twenty-four blind were given in the Commission rooms with substantial donations of candy, fruit, vegetables and gifts to both of these events, by the firms of Hahne & Company, Bamberger & Company,



and the L. S. Plaut & Company, all of Newark, N. J. A Christmas party in which Santa Claus and twelve blind children from the Newark Public School Classes for the Blind merrily participated, constituted a very pleasant feature of the Christmas holiday entertainment. Dinners at Thanksgiving and Christmas were pleasant surprises to several needy families. The Blind Men's and the Blind Girls' Clubs continued to hold their monthly meetings at the headquarters of the Commission.

The demonstrations of our blind at exhibits and sales constitute in part a social feature of our work. The outing and change is enjoyed by the demonstrator and many friends are found whose remembrances of the sightless have proven to be beneficent ones. Constant social contact with the sighted world is of inestimable value to the blind; the psychological effect of such is far-reaching; the memory of a happy visit always stays, especially in instances where the opportunity for temporary relief from home obligations has been very rare.

Through the kindness of New York and Newark friends several automobile, theatrical, musical and seashore outings were given to our blind this past year.

#### GENERAL.

A conference with the New Jersey State Federation of Association of Workers for the Blind was held at 54 James Street, Newark, New Jersey, November 8th, 1916, at which various forms of relief necessary to ameliorating the conditions of the blind were specifically discussed.

In co-operation with the State Department of Conservation and Development, the Commission for the Blind was afforded its first opportunity of demonstrating the educational, industrial and preventive aspects of its work in the State, by an exhibit which was held in the State Museum for ten days during the Legislative session, and was attended by over 4,000 visitors, including representatives from all the State Departments. Demonstrations on the loom and sewing machine operation, typewriting, reading, writing in the various embossed types used by the blind, basketry, chair caning, knitting and crocheting, raffia, reed and willow work were given, affording great publicity and adding emphasis to the practical value of the Commission's work for the blind. Products of the blind, comparing most favorably with those of the sighted, including woven rugs, table runners and fancy bags in new and attractive color and design; aprons in great variety, crocheted laces, baby wear, sweaters, jackets, bootees and other knitted articles of real artistic merit; reed, raffia and willow baskets, trays, flower vases and brushes, all useful and of credit to the workers, were on display in the museum and the lobby. Charts illustrating the ways and means of the prevention of blindness and of eye accidents were also prominently exhibited, and literature on Prevention of Blindness distributed. The Commission acknowledges its indebtedness to Miss Perry for the artistic arrangement of the display and for the success of the exhibit which she so creditably conducted.



INDUSTRIAL CLASS UNDER INSTRUCTION OF THE NEW JERSEY STATE COM-  
MISSION FOR THE BLIND, AT ITS HEADQUARTERS 147 SUMMER  
AVENUE, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY.



The annual conference of the teachers with the Executive Secretary was held on September 10, 1917.

The Secretary of the Commission, Mrs. Blanton C. Welsh, has been appointed as one of the Chairmen of the Central Committee of the Women's New Jersey State Liberty Loan Committee, and has secured the interest of the blind in response to the nation-wide call.

Mrs. Harriet Fisher Andrew has been unanimously elected to the office of President of the Trenton Auxiliary for the Industrial Blind, managing the Lighthouse at Trenton, N. J.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

The gift of the entire collection of seventy-eight embossed books from the Newark Free Public Library affords a generous increase to the general reading matter at present on hand at the headquarters of the Commission. The services of the Autocar Sales and Service, Maxwell Motor Sales and Willys' Overland, Haynes and Pierce Arrow Companies, all of Newark, N. J., in affording several pleasure trips; of the Young Men's Christian Association for two outings at Asbury Park; to Mr. Walter G. Holmes, editor of the Ziegler Magazine, for invitations to the annual theatrical performance for the benefit of the blind, and the Schubert Oratorio Society for tickets provided for musical entertainments. We are also indebted to our lecturers on the Prevention of Blindness; to the Lutheran Church of Jersey City for the use of a room for one of our Home Teacher's weekly classes; the gift of three machines, New York Point and Braille, by Mrs. Mary MacCambridge of Newark. To the volunteer helpers at headquarters; to the Scout Masters, Boy Scouts, members of the Trenton Auxiliary (Lighthouse) for service and co-operation in exhibit at State Capitol and Inter-State Fair at Trenton, and to all individuals and organizations assisting in the development of the work of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind, expressions of hearty appreciation are also extended.

Respectfully submitted,

ALICE IRENE WOOD,

*Executive Secretary.*







